

The Johnson House  
Market Street  
Salem City, Salem County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-219

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer  
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

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The Johnson House  
Market Street  
Salem City, Salem County, New Jersey

Owner: The Freeholders of Salem County

Date of Erection: 1807

Architect:

Builder: Robert G. Johnson

Present Condition: Excellent

Number of Stories: Two and one-half

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone  
and brick

Exterior walls - brick

Interior walls - plaster

Inside brick chimneys

Roof - truncated gable  
roof with dormers

Historical Data:

Robert Gibbon Johnson was the son of Robert Johnson, Esquire, of the "Netherlands" in Mannington. He and his mother moved into Salem after the death of their father in 1796 and lived in the Alexander Grant House. In 1798 Robert Johnson married Miss Hannah Carney of Penns Neck. He had ample means and in 1807 built for himself and wife the present house.

Colonel Robert G. Johnson, as he was generally called from the fact that he had received a commission as colonel of cavalry from Governor Williamson in 1817, was a graduate of Princeton College who devoted his life to agricultural pursuits. He was a member of the State Legislature and in his early manhood went out with a regiment in the famous Whiskey Insurrection in Western Pennsylvania. He gave the land for the establishment of the First Presbyterian Church in Salem. He wrote and published in his later years a volume called An Historical Account of the First Settlement of Salem in West Jersey and was the first vice-president of the New Jersey Historical Society at its establishment in 1845.

The house appears much the same on the exterior as when it was built. Some changes have been made in the interior; some of the high mantelpieces of carved wood have been removed and marble ones substituted. The ornamental woodwork of the hall has not been disturbed and retains its original beauty.

Bibliography:

Field Book and Drawings of Survey

"Colonial Roof-Trees" and "Candle Ends"  
Salem, Salem County Historical Society,  
1934

Walter E. Rutt

Supervising Historian

Approved:

SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, A.I.A.  
District Officer

A D D E N D U M

It appears from the will of Colonel Johnson that the addition in the rear of the house was built after his death in 1850, for the will reads "Should I not live to make an addition to the offices as I had contemplated, it is my will and desire that my executor do erect a brick building in the rear and adjoining the offices." He also sets down specific specifications for the building. His plans called for a three story addition; however, only two stories were built.

Colonel Johnson willed the property to his daughter Anna G. Hubbell. He further stipulated that upon the death of his wife and his daughter the property to go to his son Johnson Hubbell. In his will Colonel Johnson stated that his descendants were to "forever preserve and retain" this property and to "remember that this land has been in possession of this family since 1674". In spite of this, his daughter Anna and his son Johnson sold the property to Robert C. Johnson in 1866. Robert C. Johnson willed the property to his wife Julia and his son Henry H. It remained in the possession of the later Johnsons until 1922 when it was sold to the County of Salem.

## Bibliography:

Material collected by Alberta H.  
Moss, F.A.B.S. Field Historian

  
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Supervising Historian

Approved:

  
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SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, A.I.A.  
District Officer

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